



The Onyx Informer

Serving the people of the diaspora

Since 1972

September 28, 1999

The Freshmen Are Here!



Freshmen at the first Legacy 2000 meeting at the Raytheon Amphitheater in the Egan Center.
Photo credit: Jamila Hill, Onyx Staff



Double Treat Bakery in the new Stetson East Marketplace
Photo credit: John Brewer, Freelance Photographer

Bon Appetite!

Kerrita McClaughly
Onyx Staff

Gone are the days when waffles and ice cream are eaten for dinner as Northeastern unveiled the new Stetson East Marketplace which could change the longstanding perception that college dining and fine cuisine are oxymorons.

Designed and bathed in warm earth tones, the Marketplace transports you to European Old World elegance. The kitchen has been brought out into the dining room and attention to detail is evident, especially in the china and food selections. The Marché restaurant in the Prudential Center is perhaps the closest comparison that comes immediately to mind.

"We consider this to be the premier din-

ing facility in the city of Boston," gushes a proud Mike Vigna, Director of Food Services Business Office. Attention to detail is deliberate and the focus is on upscale dining, according to Vigna. If looks and taste are anything to go by, I would have to agree with him.

The marketplace is open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and serves as a coffeehouse from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. The wonderful concept for the market, was the result of focus groups done by dining services, to find out what students really wanted. The needs and desires of all students were taken into consideration and presented to the architects.

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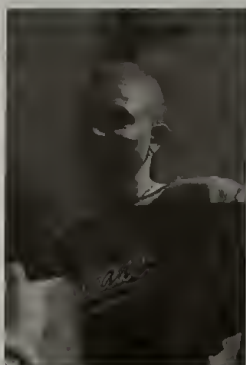
That time of year has come again. The air is becoming brisk. The leaves are taking on a different hue. School has started and the freshmen have arrived. The Onyx spoke to some of them during moving in day and here is what they had to say. *Photos by John Brewer, Freelance Photographer.*

Jamila Hill
Onyx Staff



Tannise Palmer
Brooklyn, New York
Undecided

Tannise Palmer is a member of the track team. She came to Northeastern University because of the co-operative program. She enjoys the people at NU and the atmosphere. The things she will miss most about home are "fights with my brothers."



John Alexander
Centerville, Virginia
Computer Science

John is attending NU on a basketball scholarship as a point guard. His goal for this year is to "fit in with the team and get settled with my major." John said that he would miss his daughter and girlfriend most from home. As for his expectations of Northeastern, "I just came to play basketball and go to school."



Trazana Brown
Randolph, Massachusetts
Undecided

Trazana came to NU because of the co-op program and because "a lot of my family came here and liked it." Among those members are her mother, father, aunts, and uncles. Her family thought Northeastern was a good place to get to know people. The one thing from home that she is definitely going to continue doing is play ice hockey.



Justin Franks
Providence, Rhode Island
Undecided

Justin has come to Northeastern on a half scholarship for music. He plays both the soprano and the tenor saxophone. All he wants to do for his first year at NU is "adjust to a new area, keep my grades up, and get some direction as to where I want to go."



Shante Burrell
New York

International Business/Marketing
Shante thinks Northeastern has a nice campus and is very pretty. She came to NU because she thought it would be the best place for her to learn about her major.



Neil Anderson
Nyack, New York

Neil Anderson came to Northeastern on a football scholarship as an outside linebacker. He plans on "meeting a lot of new people and getting a good education." He is not worried about getting around the campus although he thinks it might be difficult to get around the city. As to his first year at Northeastern, Neil has no expectations; he is just going to leave it "open for whatever happens."

Photo shy freshmen

Eric Perez
Long Island, New York
Architecture

Eric came to Northeastern because "it offered me the most money." For his first year at NU he "hopes that I'm able to stay on track and pass all my classes."

Daryl Edwards
Mount Vernon, New York
Computer Engineer

Daryl came to Northeastern because of the co-op program and because "I heard it was fairly diverse." He thinks NU has a "friendly atmosphere." Daryl plans to keep his grades up, stay out of trouble, and make his parents proud. The one thing he will miss most about home is the food.

Makeke Motley
Wallingford, Pennsylvania
Political Science

Makeke came to Northeastern because it is located in Boston, his major, and the co-op program. He likes the campus and wants to "just do well academically and keep my grade solid." Makeke is afraid of failure academically and socially. The thing he will miss most from home is "my family and friends."

Jason Morgan
Long Island, New York
Computer Engineer

Jason chose Northeastern because of the co-op program and because the school is in the middle of the city, which reminds him of New York. Jason wants "to prove to myself that I can handle being away from home." He is afraid of failing, "not class-wise but in not accomplishing my goals." And the one thing he will miss most about home is Junior's CheeseCake in Brooklyn.

Ron Tull
Long Island, New York
Accounting

Ron came to Northeastern to "get an education and have a good time." He likes Northeastern's location, campus, and the co-op program. Ron plans on "graduating on time with enough knowledge and experience to get a decent job."

Nicole Davis
Dorchester, Massachusetts
Medical Laboratory Science

Nicole has always been excited about going to Northeastern. She knows a couple of people who go to NU and hopes to "get into a lot of clubs and organizations." She plans on getting involved in community service and the student newspaper.



Courtney Anderson
Business Administration

Courtney came to Northeastern because it was a good school and the co-op program. She is impartial as to whether or not she likes the campus.

Join
The Onyx Informer
We meet every
Tuesday at 6pm,
430 Curry Student
Center

When No means No!

Kerrita McLaughlyn
Onyx Staff

With a smile on her face, Maria picked her clothes off the bed. Jay had just called and was on his way over. She had been seeing him since orientation and he was mad cool.

There was a knock on the door and Jay came in and sat on her bed. In her cramped dorm room there was nowhere else to sit. Her roommate was spending the night at a friend's room. Jay started kissing her, she thought, "I'm not ready for this. But he was so cute, and mad girls wanted to be with him."

His hand went lower, she tensed,

"Jay, No!" she said. "Why not, you know you my girl!" He kissed her again, she smiled, "I'm his girl. I don't want to do this, I'm not ready but he wants to be with me, maybe it won't be so bad." "You know I love you. You know, your my girl." Maria let out a muffled no, drowned by Jay as he pushed her down on the bed.

Maria was coerced into having sex. Maria's story represents one of the many sexual assault accounts that are often too real on most college campuses. North-

eastern is no exception, especially at the beginning of the school year.

According to Northeastern's brochure on Sexual Assault, A Resource Guide for Men and Women, most rapes and sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim. This includes friends, classmates, co-workers, instructors, relatives, casual acquaintances, or someone you are dating.

The brochure notes several precautions that can be used to reduce the risk of assault: avoid excessive use of alcohol and other drugs and

say "No" when you mean no. Something Maria failed to do.

"Sometimes there is nothing you can do to prevent a sexual assault but there are things you can do to prevent it," said Dr. Angela Londono-McConnell, Ph.D. psychologist at Northeastern's Counseling Center.

If you are sexually assaulted there are various steps you can take. Call a friend or family member for support; get to a place where you will be safe from further attack and call the police, and seek medical attention immediately. For immediate help, you can use various sources on campus including: public safety to provide investigation and transportation to hospital,

Lane Health Center to provide medical evaluation and treatment, and the Counseling Center to provide individual counseling and follow up support.

The Northeastern Counseling Center, located in 302 Ell building, is staffed to provide counseling services to students. According to Londono-McConnell, the center has six staff psychologists and six doctoral level interns. "Most of us have training with people who have been sexually assaulted," she said.

The center offers individual counseling for people that have been sexually assaulted and have resources in hospitals and crisis centers in the community, if those are needed.

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Welcome Freshmen

from Lula Petty-Edwards, Dean of the John D. Bryant African American Institute



NU President Richard Freeland
Photo credit: J.D. Levine

I am pleased to have this opportunity to extend a warm greeting to all new and returning readers of The Onyx Informer. Those of you who are joining the Northeastern family for the first time might be pleased to know that you have helped us make this the University's strongest student body in a generation. Last year, 16,300 high school seniors applied to Northeastern for the 2,800 available seats in this year's freshman class. Applications from students who wanted to transfer from other colleges and universities also grew. We selected you because we saw in you the intellectual passion, practical capability, and personal maturity needed to succeed at Northeastern. Given the competition you faced, you should feel proud you made the cut.

Having crossed one hurdle, you now face another: surviving and thriving in a rigorous academic environment. In the coming months, succeeding academically will require dedication and hard work. The good news is that you are at a University that is strongly committed to quality education and is proud of the success of our graduates. If you are attentive in class and study hard, we will do our part to help you realize the dreams that have brought you to this point in your academic career.

Another thing to keep in mind is that an important part of a Northeastern education happens outside the classroom. With over 140 activities and organizations to choose from, there are plenty of opportunities to make connections with your classmates, contribute to the community, or just have fun. The key is to reach out and get involved—in sports, in a club, as a volunteer. Introduce yourselves to your professors. Get to know the staff in student affairs, financial aid, residential life, the library, academic affairs and your college dean's office. We're here to help you get off to a good start and maintain that momentum as you take on leadership roles and make your marks at Northeastern.

We are also here to help insure that Northeastern continues to grow as a pluralistic community. We champion diversity because we know that in the workplace and society of the future, having successful careers and meaningful lives will depend upon an ability to work and live with people from different backgrounds and with various points of view. Your class offers a wonderful mix of backgrounds—in hometowns, majors, ethnicity, race, language and religion. Promoting greater diversity and racial understanding across our campus is one of our top priorities and I welcome your participation and support as we continue to strive to make Northeastern a welcoming community.

The months ahead promise to be both challenging and rewarding for all of us. I look forward to the contributions, insights and energy you will bring to our community as the

After I was invited to submit an article for this first issue of the Onyx, I thought about a matter of great concern to me: the performance of students of African origin in the academy, and in life after the academy. I was reminded of my recent reflections as I watched and rejoiced at the achievements of Tiger Woods on the golf course and the Williams sisters on the tennis court.

All three of these young people gave outstanding athletic performances. I concluded that among the many factors, which contributed to their competitive edge, was that others set high expectations for them and they internalized those expectations for themselves. I also surmised that the same positive role of high expectations could be generalized to student performance in the academy and beyond.

Therein begins the role of the John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute in the lives of students at Northeastern University. Its motto is "Preparation Now for a Lifetime of Contribution." Inherent in that statement is a series of positive "expectations."

The first of these is that students will engage in serious scholarship with a fo-

cus on academic excellence. Classes will not be chosen because they appear "easy," but will be chosen because they are challenging and intellectually stimulating. Front row seats in classes will be actively sought, not avoided. Preparation for class will be the rule, not the exception. Honor role status will be commonplace, not rare.

A corresponding expectation is that students will believe that they can achieve at a high level of excellence and will subsequently do so. Matching this expectation is the Institute's commitment to providing quality tutorials, classroom instruction, academic advising, advocacy, a supportive environment for study groups, computer service, library research, educational, social, and cultural programming, and student meetings and focused discussions, analyzing issues of identity, values, critical thinking, cultural clarity, and empowerment.

The ultimate goal is that students will earn undergraduate and graduate degrees with insight into how and why they must use education to: a) become employers, not just employees; producers (an important example is the ONYX staff) and not just consumers. b) nurture each other, b)

control the unrestrained desire for individual, material privilege in the face of collective suffering, c) pool resources to acquire wealth for group benefit, d) and focus on success, not just survival.

Another expectation is that students will be guided by the understanding that education is a special privilege for people of African origin in these United States, earned and sustained by the struggle (including the brutalization and death) of many. It carries with it a dual responsibility to acknowledge the debt owed to those who opened the doors of educational opportunity and to repay the debt by constantly being lifetime doorkeepers.

Finally, there is the expectation that students will ask and attempt to answer the questions, education for whom and for what? At least one part of the answer should be that education would be used to improve the life circumstances of self, family, people of African origin, and humankind generally. If the power of positive high expectations can be successfully communicated and internalized by all of us, then you, the students, can increase the odds that you will give an academic and life performance that will equal the athletic performance of Woods, Williams, and Williams. My expectation is that you will.

from Linda Delgado, Director of Latino/a Student Cultural Center

Bienvenidos.

On behalf of the Latino/a Student Cultural Center, I want to welcome you to Northeastern University. We at the Center are here to help you adjust to your new environment and to support your efforts as you pursue your education, as you will see earning a degree is not easy. Please stop by the Center and find out what kind of resources we have to help you.

You will find much more than informa-



tion at the LSCC. We have a wonderful staff of professionals and students who understand the trials and tribulations of university life, as well as all of the joys and benefits that come along with hard work.

We can be your home away from home while fostering an environment conducive to learning. The Center uniquely integrates academics and student activities and our culture. As part of Student Services we are here to help you. The Center is located on 104 Forsyth Street next to Public Safety.

Bon Appetite, from page 1

According to Vigna, students wanted better seating space, different foods, more choices and more vegetarian choices. Students also wanted a place for activities.

Students can use the coffeehouse space for activities. "We are working with Residential Life to develop an activities schedule," said Vigna. The coffeehouse is set up for sound so musical performances are possible. It's an excellent place for small intimate meetings for groups, and students are encouraged to contact Residential Life to take advantage of this opportunity.

The marketplace boasts seven food stations. It's fresh grille, offers breakfast, lunch and dinner, all grilled to order. Like all the other stations, it caters to both meat lovers and vegetarians. The market also boasts a Sandwich Central and The Market Carvery, which serves foods such as carved bake ham, chicken pot pie and baked macaroni and cheese. For all you vegetarians out there, The Garden Emporium offers a variety of salads and multigrain breads and rolls. "Our noodle bar is our most popular item," said Vigna. It was expanded the week before it opened because it was such a hit.

Trattoria is a delight for Italian food lovers; it offers fresh pasta, pizza and sauces in a wonderful blend. The center

for refreshment offers a full service juice and gourmet bar and the Double Treat Bakery offer's muffins "baked fresh every day," Vigna said. The bakery offers very upscale baked goods, according to Vigna and also offers coffees, espressos and cappuccinos. The image of the French cafes is poignant in one's mind after a visit to bakery.

One of the most innovative features of this marketplace, is the Menutainment station. It offers a daily presentation of food techniques and product demonstrations. This is a wonderful way to learn to cook for those of us who are leaving the comforts of mom and dad's home cooking and can't fry an egg if they were paid to.

For the cynics who have survived NU's dining experience and view with skepticism this new dining ploy, Vigna offers hope. "We are going to maintain the food choices that people want," he said, "we want the best quality food served as quickly as possible."

"Parents and students are loving it," said Maureen Timmons, Director of Dining Services. "We have people singing up that are not required to be on a meal plan."

"We are getting a lot of feedback from RSA and SGA," Vigna added.

To access the services of the marketplace, one only has to be a NU student. You can use your meal plan, busky card or cash, according to Vigna. "Our Profiler plan is

geared towards commuters and upperclassmen living in apartments," Timmons said. The Profiler plan, offers three meal packages for the year. It does not expire for the quarter and it allows students that don't have time to cook to enjoy meals without being on a meal plan. The cheapest plan offers 48 meals with two guests pass for the year at a price of \$388. For someone who doesn't like to or doesn't have time to cook, this might be a reasonable plan for the year. To find out more about the profiler option, students can contact the Dining Service Office in Speare Hall.

Native Son

Kerita McClaughly
Onyx Staff

Khalid Hill is a 19 year-old freshman at UMASS Boston majoring in Theater Arts. Hill, is no ordinary college freshmen. He is a tap dancer, who for the last two years, has been an understudy for all roles except one in "Bring in da Noise, Bring in da Funk." We spoke with him recently.

Q. How did you get involved with Noise Funk?

In May of 1997 I went to a workshop called Funk University in New York for three months. At the end of the workshop they had auditions for the show and I got in. In all honesty, I truly feel like I got in because I prayed.

Q. What was the experience like?

In the beginning it was hard, it was my first major production. The choreographer went really fast in terms of teaching us because we had a limited time to learn everything. I just came out of Funk U. so I had a lot of brushing up to do in terms of my own style of tap because I didn't really have my own individual style. And because I was still in high school and none of the other guys were, they were all older than I was. It was hard because I would have to hit the books while the other guys were clubbing.

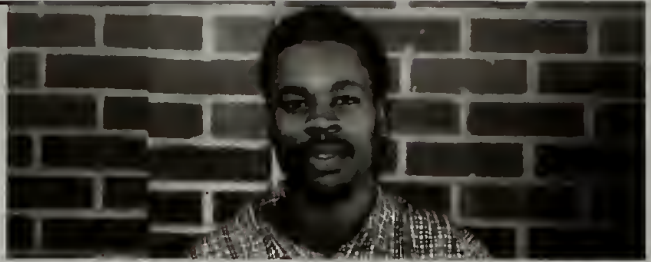
Q. What was touring like?

The first nine cities, it was fun because it was the first time I was traveling and I was

visiting cities I never thought I'd visit, different environments and different ghettos. It was exhilarating but by the second year, it seemed like traveling was beginning to get irritating. We spent shorter periods of time in the city. In the first year we spent a month at a time but the second year we'd spend 2-3 weeks. So it got to be that we were flying just about every week. There was no time to get comfortable. We were always on the move.

Q. What do you miss most and what did you learn?

I miss the show itself. I learned so much from it. I learned a lot of history because the show tells about the Black experience in America. Being around other professionals helped me grow skill-wise in dancing and acting. And I developed a sense of professionalism. I've seen how far I can go in my acting, in my dancing, in my talents. But I've also had a lot of embarrassing moments. I learned that no matter how good you get in something, you're always going to have bitter



Khalid Hill, former member of tour cast for Bring in da noise, Bring in da funk

Photo credit: Khalid Hill

times. I also learned that bitter times are needed because sometimes you need to fail in order to succeed.

Q. When did you get back to Boston?

I just got home June of this year, I spent the summer looking at colleges. I got into UMASS Boston the week before school started, I had an interview and they let me in on the spot. I don't think they accepted Me because of the show, I forgot my resume and I didn't tell them about the show although I had planned on bringing my resume because I figured once they saw the show I would be in. I'm just glad I'm in college. I took a year off and was kind of skeptical about how I was going to go about making the leap from Broadway show to college in the fall.

Q. What do you like about being home?

I like being with the family again. I won't miss the major holidays anymore. We worked

everyday, even on Christmas. I like being back in church, I go to New Covenant Christian Church.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

I want to win an Osear, finish school and get a job making money. I want to really, just get stronger in Christ, in my faith...reading my word more and being around people who are about making moves. Should I mention the wife and kids, well that's automatically going to happen.

Q. Have you kept in contact with people from Noise Funk?

I haven't kept in touch with anyone from the show. I haven't gotten a chance to yet. Everyone's pretty much doing their own thing. I've spoken to a few people but I haven't really made the effort to keep the lines of communication open. But it's good because I'll see them again anyway. People are put in your life for a reason and we're not finished yet.

Liberia, America's forgotten child

Kami-Leigh Agard
Onyx Staff

Last week President Clinton granted over 10,000 Liberians two more years to stay in the United States. This was two weeks after the President's administration announced the Liberian's Temporary Protected Status (TPS) status would run out after September 28.

"My brothers and sisters from the African continent for 10 years have no voice in this country. We have lobbied for legislation with U.S. Representative Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) to allow those of us who are here to stay as permanent residents. President Clinton's allowance of two more years, just gives us more time to work towards permanent residency status here in the U.S.," said Torli Kruea, president of the Liberian Community Association of Massachusetts and executive director of Universal Human Rights International (UHRI). "We Liberians are seeking lasting stability in the United States."

UHRI, located in the heart of Roxbury, is a group of immigrants and human rights advocates who seek equitable treatment of all immigrants irrespective of race, religion, social class or national origin.

Frederick slaves and US Presidents carved out Liberia in 1822. A Harvard University Professor drafted Liberia's constitution. The country's flag and pledge of allegiance point out its ties to the United States. Yet according to Kruea, "Liberians feel that they are being abandoned."

In 1991, approximately 4,827 Liberians were granted TPS shortly after the outbreak of a brutal and protracted civil war in Liberia. Since that time thousands of Liberians came to the United States to seek asylum from a seven year civil war that killed about 200,000 people and made refugees of half the country's 2.5 million people.

"In 1997, Africa had the largest number of refugees in the world. Out of a total of 13.2 million, 4.3 million were Africans. Yet the Refugee Admissions Ceiling for Eastern Europeans is almost 7.5 times more than that for Africans," said Kruea. According to

Francie Latour in an article of The Boston Globe, "Many say the mass wandering of Africans has long been overshadowed by the plight of Bosnians, Russians and now Kosovar Albanians who dominated the world's headlines."

"I believe that the United States Refugee Ceiling or quota reflects racism. In 1997, the African continent refugee quota was 12 thousand, for South Asia it was 14 thousand, yet for Serbia, a tiny country, it was 28 thousand. It seems as though as the complexion of the people gets lighter, the amount welcomed to the country is increased," said Kruea.

"Liberians have been here for nine years, have paid taxes, have had kids here, and yet the state has said we cannot have more permanent status," said Moses Saygbe, president of the Liberian Community Association of Rhode Island. Rhode Island has the highest population of Liberians in the United States.

Liberians' TPS status has generally extended year by year or, in few instances, in smaller increments of time. Since the civil war has wound down, however, the extension has been a tougher call. Attorney Janet Reno was set to let it expire last fall until a renewed outbreak of hostilities prompted her to extend it for another year, which was to expire on September 28. The law that created the TPS status requires that there be "ongoing armed conflict" in the home nations of refugee groups.

After study by the State Department, Reno made an official finding that conditions in Liberia "really didn't fit the law." She noted for example, that the State Department had reported that 250,000 Liberians in exile in other African countries have returned home.

As far as we're concerned, the living conditions in Liberia have not improved at all," said Saygbe. "The government is still undergoing an upheaval due to the terrorist acts conducted by the rebel leaders turned president, Charles Taylor."

The status that President Clinton granted the Liberians is distinct from TPS. It is known as deferred enforced departure (DED). It will permit the Liberians in the United States for two more years, while Congress considers the extending legislation.

"This is not a Liberian problem. It is not

an African problem. It reflects racism. It's an American issue," said Kruea.

For more information on Liberians struggle towards obtaining permanent residency in the United States, contact Torli Kruea at United Human Rights International at (617) 445-6700 or The Onyx at 373-2250.

STRIVE, for Success

Byron Calamese
Onyx Staff

Hundreds of Northeastern University students and faculty members rush through Ruggles Station everyday overlooking another school, one in which tardiness is inexcusable and a good attitude is mandatory.

With locations in Dorchester, Roxbury, and now Forsyth Street, STRIVE (Support and Training Result in Valuable Employees) is a non-profit organization, focused on employment training and job placement for men and women between the ages of 18 and 40 who are unskilled and inexperienced in the work force.

"We deal with people from the ground up," said Steven Berlack, Executive Director of the program."

Berlack, a former Operations Manager of Programming at the East Harlem Employment Service in New York, says that many of the students enrolled in the program are minorities with a history of crime, minimal education and work history, and a lack of family support.

During the free, three-week STRIVE workshop; training includes role playing in a simulated workplace environment. Students learn how to take and act on instructions, accept criticism and function as team members. They are also taught how to dress and speak appropriately for the workplace, how to use the telephone, write resumes and fill out job applications.

Following training, STRIVE assists each graduate with finding entry-level employment and maintains contact with them for a minimum of two years.

Gina Laurent came to the United States in 1995 looking to get ahead. With her deep Haitian accent, Laurent was unsure if she would find work. She credits the STRIVE program with giving her the confidence to continue

her education and receive a certificate in business software application.

"STRIVE was the first to put my feet through the door," said Laurent who is now Graduate Service Coordinator of the program. "They were very patient with me in order to understand me."

Founded in Harlem in 1984, STRIVE is now located in 11 different U.S. cities with a London office in the planning stages.

Only 50 percent of the students who begin STRIVE actually graduate. Berlack and Laurent agree that some students just aren't ready for the boot-camp style class setting. Berlack believes that the emotional bond between students and staff are what make the program work.

After losing touch with a former graduate for over a year, Berlack received a call informing him that she had become an office manager at a local company.

"I felt like a father, whose child had gone on past him," said Berlack. "I was excited because she used what we taught her and progressed from there."

Funding for the program is completely private which organizers feel allows the program to respond more effectively to the needs of participants and employers. Accepting Federal funds would force the program to follow several federal regulations restricting them from making day-to-day adjustments to meet the realities of the market place.

Berlack wants the program to expand to areas where they can have an impact on the community.

"The whole program is based on ties," said Berlack. "We want to get them focused on a leadership role, and you can't unless you form a bond with a the community."

THE ONYX INFORMER

EDITORIAL

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All opinion pieces and letters must be 250 words, typed, and single-spaced. They must be submitted by the third Tuesday of every month. All submissions must include name, major, email and phone number.

The Onyx Informer reserves the right to edit all submissions for content, size, and clarity. No submissions will be returned.

Call to the Masses

Another school year has begun and The Onyx Informer will be there to cover it all. From hard news stories and opinion pieces to music reviews and poetry, The Onyx will bring readers the facts, the emotions, and the insight and we invite you to help us. As the minority student newspaper of Northeastern University, we need your talents. Whatever gifts you can bring to the table, whether as a writer, a photographer, a copy editor, or anything else, your contributions would be greatly appreciated. We meet every Tuesday at 6:00pm in room 430 Curry Student Center. Come and find out more about us and about you.

The Challenge

Baptism by fire. That's exactly what the university experience is...a baptism by fire. You are thrown into an unfamiliar situation with unfamiliar people. You learn new rules and make up some of your own as you go along. Many have gone through what you will be going through and have survived. And you too will survive. But your survival is not the question. The real question is what will you leave behind. What will your legacy be to the freshman after you? Materialism, selfishness, and apathy all plague our society, and yes, this school. Don't catch the sickness. Join something while you are here. Northeastern has many groups and

organizations that need people, that need you. Without you, we cannot survive. We cannot do what we set out to do, to make a difference in this university and to enhance the experience of its students. What we ask is not a demand but a challenge. And this challenge is two-fold. We challenge you to think enough of yourself to know that you can make a difference. To realize James Baldwin's theory that "if you know whence you came, there is really no limit to where you can go" or what you can accomplish. We also challenge you to care enough about those who will inherit the school after you. To have the desire and drive, as many before you, to want to make a difference. This is no easy task. There will be a lot of hard work and long hours. It requires dedication and individuals strong enough to be able to handle such a large assignment. But there are also many benefits. You will meet many interesting people and make new friends. You will walk away with a stronger sense of self in knowing that you can do whatever you put your mind to. Plus, you will have fun the process. Do you accept this challenge?

Jamila Hill and Kerrita McClaughlyn
Co-Editors
The Onyx Informer

Speaking Out

A chief reason the last five years were the best years of my life was my involvement in student activities. Any student owes it to him/herself to do more than just go to classes and for plenty of reasons that most of you have heard many times before.

You pay a lot of money to go here, so you owe it to yourself to make the most of it. But this isn't just about studying hard to get a 4.0. An important part of this will be to not just sit back and complain when you have an issue, be it something in your classes, something you see in your residence hall, or any other issue that may arise. If an issue arises concerning you, stand up and take action through an avenue available to you.

As a student, I was often very cynical about student activism here. To a degree I still am. Sadly, folks will go to a party and stay until they have to be thrown out of the place, but they won't come to anything remotely educational or about something serious. Yes, classes load up your brain with plenty to think about, but there's more to life after school's out than just parties.

The student leadership I see is good. However, as much as we like to fault our leaders for our problems (both here and in the larger world), they alone are hardly the source of the issues we face. Leaders can only do so much on their own. The effectiveness of even the best leaders imaginable can be limited by inactivity of others.

You need to take advantage of this leadership and take ownership of your education and your life here. Get involved in something that interests you, take action if you have an issue, and most of all keep up with what's going on. Don't wait for someone else to do something you want accomplished, because chances are it will not get done without your support.

The ball is in your court. You have every opportunity to make your college years and those of students who come after you a great experience. You can make these years something you wouldn't trade for anything, or you can choose to miss out. I hope that most of you choose the first option, as it is far more appealing to me and should be to you as well.

Philip T. Kasiecki is a 1999 Graduate of Northeastern University. He is now an Electrical Engineer at EST Corporation.

You want advice about how to stay in college? First we must investigate the word procrastination. I am a Procrastinator who had to learn the hard way. You may wonder what makes me an expert - I am a junior who started her first year with many friends and now when I look around the campus, I feel alone because they are all gone. Before we blame "the man," let us examine what happened to these people.

We can first discuss the Financial Aid and Bursar's office. I know for a fact that when you are blocked (meaning you can't register for classes because you either owe money or forgot to hand in your paperwork), a letter is sent to your house three weeks before the quarter starts. It is your choice to take care of the block at that point or put it off until two days before classes begin.

Sad to say, most students choose option two. If you don't believe me, check the Ballroom in the Student Center or Financial Aid office days before classes begin. The Ballroom normally has a line that starts from the second floor and ends on the first, while financial aid has people sweating just standing in one position.

All this could be prevented if students would clear their blocks ahead of time. There are people on this campus who are willing to help you, but if you do not come to them as soon as you find out, they cannot help you.

When I was a freshman, I received a letter in my mailbox with some paper work for me to fill out. Instead of filling the information out, I placed it in my desk and left it there for a month. I then decided to fill it out and sent it to Financial Aid. One day I noticed that I was blocked, which at the time was impossible because according to my records, my tuition was paid for the whole year plus I had extra money to get books. When I went to Financial Aid, I was told that because I waited so long to fill out my form, ALL of my scholarships and grants were taken away from me. I am not a crying person, but I almost broke down in tears. If I wanted to continue school, I had to pay \$10,000 before the next quarter. Luckily for me, the person who is in charge of the Legacy 2000 program, was able to pull some strings that got me my grants and scholarships back. (Thanks Paula!!!)

I was lucky enough to learn about the evils of procrastination without transferring, most of my friends were not. Do you want to take that gamble? If I had a chance to interview all my friends for you, their leaving NU came down to one little word...Procrastination.

Maxamillion-Shell Crawford is a junior communications major.

The new school year begins with many changes made to Northeastern's campus. There is the new West campus dorms, new computer lab in Hayden and a new dining hall. I've been at NU for three years and although the changes made have been appealing, there seems to be no problem with wasting money on this campus.

I have to ask you one question, if they could throw up a dorm in no time, why did it take them so long to redo the African American Institute? Don't get me wrong, I am happy for, and appreciate the changes made to the campus but I am disappointed it took a flood for the Institute to be renovated.

We, as minority students are also at fault because we do not use the Institute. If the administration at NU observes that we spend our time elsewhere, they cannot be faulted for spending their money elsewhere.

The Institute was built so that minority students could have a place to call home. In the '70's, it was a place of unity among the various ethnic groups. Along with being a home for students, it was a meeting place for people in the community.

This once active building is now barely utilized. I can remember when it was a popular place. Most of my friends and I would sometimes skip class to play dominoes in the Cabral Center.

However, it is up to students to take charge and use the Institute's services. Somewhere in the vast tuition you pay, you are paying for the Institute's services. Why don't you take advantage of it? There is so much more to the Institute than entertainment. It has a history of strong activism. Its library houses books on our history that Snell does not have. Its newly furnished computer room should be used, especially since all the computer labs on campus are always full. So much is offered yet so little is taken.

Many of us have not supported the Institute for a variety of reasons some of them personal, while others have not supported because of laziness. Whatever our issues with the Institute, we need to resolve it with them and rebuild the unity between us.

A new year and millennium is coming, so let us start it off right. If we don't, everything we've fought for will be a fading memory.

Kafui Tsaku is a junior biology major

Hector Melo's spirit lives on at NU

Kami-Leigh Agard
Onyx Staff

You may have seen him around campus, in his Nautica khakis, plaid shirt and Adidas sneakers. The people who bumped into him would always be smiling while he handed them some paper, or infectious talk about the work he was doing, or something he thought they should know.

"All of Hector's serious discussions with me took place on the streets and in the library," said Kwamina Panford, Associate Professor of African American Studies at Northeastern. You would never see him walking idly on the quad or Forsyth Street. He always seemed to be on the go.

"Walking with Hector was like walking with the mayor. Everyone knew him and liked him," said Felix "Felo" Matos Rodriguez, Associate Professor of History at Northeastern.

The new academic year has begun and some of you may have wondered where that guy you used to see walking and talking excitedly in Meserve Hall by the history department went. Physically he has passed, but as reflected by Northeastern folks, his family and colleagues in a memorial service at the Sacred Space of the Spiritual Life Center this past Thursday, his spirit is still walking briskly on campus, passing through the thoughts of those who knew and loved him.

Hector Melo was a distinguished journalist and economist in Columbia. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Hector published a series of essays on financial group structures in Columbia. His work eventually led to changes in their capital markets. He followed how major narcotics cartels were getting involved in Columbia's banks with the then government's blind eye. This was at a time when Columbia's

narcotics mafia was assassinating journalists.

Hector left his home in Columbia and brought his two children, Luisa and Hector, to the United States on August 16, 1987. "Hector wanted to get people in Columbia up in arms about this 'easy money,'" said Reverend Rick Edwards. Edwards befriended Hector in Columbia when he was in the Peace Corps.

"Hector called me when he got to Miami, FL with his kids and asked for my help. I lived in a tiny town in upstate New York called New Paltz. The Melo family came and forged a love relationship with the town's people that still flourishes," said Edwards.

In order to legally remain in the United States with his kids, Hector did his graduate studies at Columbia University in New York. He taught in the jails for a year and at the local university in New Paltz.

Hector came to Northeastern, when his daughter, Luisa, who according to History Professor Matos Rodriguez, "inherited her father's relentless intellect," accepted a scholarship to attend the university in 1995.

He first worked for the Latino, Latin American Studies Program at Northeastern with then Acting Director Lynn Stephen, former professor of sociology and anthropology at Northeastern. Hector worked to get the program established as a major.

Hector also worked to gain contact with several of the Latin American consulates in Boston with the goal of enhancing the Program's marketability to students entering and already attending the University.

Hector's work at the Center was put on hold



Hector Melo

because of roadblocks he faced with his immigrant status in the United States. After over 10 years of living and working in the United States, he was unable to obtain permanent work status.

Undaunted, Hector pulled up his suspenders and decided to pursue his doctorate in world history. His focus was on Latin American migrations from 1900 to the late 1990s. "He convinced me that he could essentially complete his work. It saddens me to know that he was unable to finish, but I'm glad that the history department agreed to have it archived," said Luis Falcon, Professor of Sociology. At the urging of Luisa and Hector Jr., the World History Center in Boston is archiving his work.

"Death in itself has no meaning. It is we, who give life meaning," quoted Luisa from Hari Krishna at her father's memorial. She comforted the large and diverse group of people absorbed with their thoughts of a friend well missed and loved by ending the memorial with "It's clear to me that his work will live on through you and that his spirit will also live on through you."

Celebrating 50 years with jazz

Jamila Hill
Onyx Staff

Turning 50 is a momentous occasion and on September 12th, Ron Anrum used his 50th birthday party in a special way. He raised money for Dorchester Neighborhood Houses, Inc.

"I wanted to celebrate the occasion and rather than just have a party with friends, I wanted to help a worthy cause," said Ron Anrum.

Anrum, who is the director of client services for Third Sector New England, is on the board of directors for Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses, Inc. a non-profit organization that has been in existence since 1965. Currently, Federated is a provider of 11 services and 72 programs to several communities in the Greater Boston area.

Earlier in the year the board of directors at Federated thought about different ways of generating funds for the organization. Ron saw his birthday as the perfect opportunity.

"He saw this as a way of getting his friends to support Federated," said Linda Mayo-Perez, Executive Director of Federated.

Paying a considerable sum of money (which was not disclosed) to attend Ron's birthday party, friends and associates gathered at Scullers Jazz Club in Cambridge for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and live jazz music.

It is still unknown as to how much money was raised for Ron's 50th birthday benefit. According to Mayo-Perez, Federated is still receiving money.

"We don't know yet because money is still coming in," said Mayo-Perez. "There were, however, two corporate sponsors." Channel 5 and The Boston Globe both donated a combined total of \$6,000.

Three groups performed that Sunday afternoon. The Danilo Perez Trio, went first. In a medley of bass, piano, and drums, the threesome engaged the audience in what Perez best classified as a journey.

Next in line was the Adrian Quartet, a group of Berklee College graduates, who played some old-school jazz. Among the artists they performed renditions of, were John Coltrane and Miles Davis.

This evening of jazz ended with a group of Ron's friends. The Joyce DiCamillo Trio, who Ron knows from his home state of Connecticut, performed a lot of old, popular jazz standards.

When No, from page 2

"All our services are free to all students enrolled at NU," said Londono-McConnell. "We offer counseling for anything that would interfere with academic success caused by personal interactions with family, friends, peers and relationships."

The center offers prevention workshops throughout the year, including sexual assault. "We offer workshops sometimes in the residences halls or if student groups invite us to talk to their members," Londono-McConnell said.

"If a student group wants us to give a talk, they should give me, the Outreach Coordinator, a call at the counseling center, at least three weeks before the event," she said. This allows the staff time to prepare for the talk.

The Counseling Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Brochures and other informative materials on sexual assault and other issues are located outside the office.

"There is always someone here, if you need help you can just walk in or make an appointment," Londono-McConnell said.

Coltrane lives on at NU

Kerrita McClaughlyn
Onyx Staff

John Coltrane stands as a musical genius of immense proportions with a legacy that is immeasurable and celebrated by jazz and music lovers all over the world.

The John Coltrane Memorial Concert, held annually at Northeastern University's Blackman Auditorium, will be celebrating its 22nd anniversary this year. It is produced by Northeastern Professors Leonard Brown and Bill Lowe, both in the Music Department.

"The driving force behind this concert is the commitment of these musicians," said Brown, "we have a collective love and respect for the music and the people that created it."

The 1999 JCMC will be held on October 9th at 7:30 p.m. in Blackman Auditorium. In celebration of the centennial anniversary of the birth of Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, this year's concert features the music of "Trane and Duke." The performances will include new arrangements of the songs from their classic 1962 Impulse recording "Duke Ellington and John Coltrane" and a special medley of sacred music compositions by both that will feature a string quartet.

This year's concert features special guest Yusef Lateef, the acclaimed multi-instrumentalist, arranger and composer and the Coltrane Ensemble which includes: saxophonists Stan Strickland, Bill Pierce and Leonard Brown; trombonists Bill Lowe and Gary Valente; percussionists Syd Smart, Keith Gibson and Sa Davis; bassists Brian McCree and Cecil McBee; David Eure on violin; Melanie Dyer on viola; Betty Hillman on cello and pianist George Russell Jr. Eric Jackson, host of WGBH's "Eric in the

Evening," will host the concert. Coltrane's Ashe, a recording of the 14th annual JCMC will be on sale at this year's concert. The double disk features afro-latin sounds and cost \$20.

Beginning in 1977 as tribute by three friends to Coltrane on the 10th anniversary of his death, the concert has "grown to be a major event in Boston and New England," said Brown, one of the original members.

Brown, along with percussionist Syd Smart and the late bassist Hayes Burnet held their first concert at the Friends of Great Black Music Loft in 1977. The response to the concert from musicians and music lovers was overwhelming, so they decided to hold the concert annually.

"The concert moved to Northeastern in 1987, when I got appointed as faculty here," Brown said.

"For the first 10 years we did it without making any money, it wasn't about the money."

The concert, according to Brown, has received support from NU in the use of the space in Blackman auditorium and is also partially funded by NU. "We are given money based on the university's resources every year, we are not underwritten by the university," he said.

"We get support from BankBoston, Boston Globe Foundation and the Fuller Foundation," he said of the other concert sponsors.

Along with the annual concert, the JCMC also has an Education Outreach Program. In its seventh year, the concert collaborates with several schools in the Boston and Cambridge private and public systems to bring children to the concert and teach students

about the music.

The JCMC also provides an educational experience for college students. Each year, a symposium is held before each concert. Featured guest Yusef Lateef will conduct this year's symposium on Friday October 8th in the Raytheon Amphitheater, Egan Center.

Many NU classes are also required to attend the annual concert, including African American studies, Music, and History. Student attendance at the concert over the years has been dismal, except for classes required to attend.

"We highly recommend that students attend, this is an important event," said Brown, "it will be a highly enriching experience."

The concert also offers a coop position. "We have had a coop for the last five years," Brown said.

"We created a summer coop position for students interested in concert production. It is targeted towards music majors."

Pete Vasconcellos is this year's coop. "It's been the best job I've ever had," said Vasconcellos, "I've learned more in three months than I've learned in four years at this school."

"I've learned about graphic design, communication and organizational skills and business practices. I've also learned how to put together a concert. It's been the best learning experience I've had."

Vasconcellos recommends the coop position to anyone who is in love with music. Ticket prices are \$20 for admission; \$15 for seniors and non-NU students and \$10 for NU students. For more info, visit the JCMC website at www.jcmc.neu.edu. For tickets, call the NU Center for the Arts Ticket Office at (617) 373-2247.

Renaissance Man

Kerrita McClaughly
Onyx Staff

Michael Holley is a sport columnist for The Boston Globe. In writing this piece I searched for a million ways to describe the man I consider a friend, a mentor, a talented writer and a wonderful human being. Each word seems inadequate so I will allow him to show you who he is.

Q. Where are you from?

I'm from Akron, Ohio. It's 30 miles south of Cleveland. Since I was nine, I knew I wanted to leave. It's a nice midwestern town, good place to raise kids.

Q. Where did you go to school?

I went to Point Park College in Pittsburgh. I was a Journalism/Communications major with a minor in screenwriting and film.

Q. What drew you to sports journalism?

I majored in journalism out of ignorance. I've always liked to write since I was eight or nine. I thought that writers majored in journalism. I was also a paperboy, and I always read the headlines and the sports page. I am a sports junkie. It was a marriage of two loves.

Q. Who are your influences as a writer?

James Baldwin was like my father. Black authors were like my parents. I was also influenced from being around preachers. My family was strong in the church, my grandfather was a preacher and a great storyteller.

Q. What do you want to do in terms of writing?

What I really want to do is to explore every medium of writing. Sports Journalism is just the beginning. I want to write poetry, plays, novels and do screenwriting.

Q. How long have you been in journalism and where did you start out?
I've been in journalism for seven years. I started out at my hometown paper, Akron Beacon Journal. It was the same paper I used to deliver for when I was a kid. I was there for two years.

Q. What were your initial thoughts about Boston?

Boston has a terrible national reputation. You hear terrible stories about Boston and you just wouldn't want to come here. I didn't like it for my first year and a half but now I really like it. It grows on you. I do think it needs a FM station and not an AM that goes down with the sun. It's also too puritanical, it needs nightlife. The political situation is also frightening.

Q. What's been your experience as a Black sports columnist for the Boston Globe?

I don't consider myself a sports columnist. I don't give the Globe credit for saying that I'm a columnist. They still ask me to do stuff other columnist don't do - I still cover pro-basketball.

Q. What has the public's response been?

People have incredible reactions to my caricature in the paper. One reaction is, "It's a Dread, I gotta read

it," the other reaction is "He hates white people" regardless of whether my column said I love white people over and over. Any kind of reaction that is possible, I've experienced. I've been called welfare baby, crackhead and affirmative action baby.

Q. How do you cope?

It's definitely a challenge to deal with all these reactions. The Globe has never had a Black sports columnist, it's never had a Female sports columnist. I wrote a column recently about Donna Harris-Lewis and I received a phone call from a reader saying that I only wrote about her because she was black.

Q. How do you react to accusations that you write your columns based on race?

I don't think like that. So many people are caught up in role-playing. If you're a writer you can't pick sides, you have to think. You have to think to be a good writer. Too many people are afraid to comment on issues. I think more white people should comment on issues and not be afraid of race.

Q. Have you enjoyed being a columnist?

I've enjoyed it because it allows me to talk. It gives me an opportunity to talk legitimately about sports, I can voice my opinions.

Q. What has it been like?

It's hard. You do need encouragement. It's nice when you get some support. I do receive some



Boston Globe Sports Columnist Michael Holley, 7/27/98
Photo credit: Boston Globe Staff Photo by Paul Drake

encouraging mail.

Q. How do you ensure you don't burn out creatively, how do you rejuvenate?

For six weeks every year I shut myself off from the world. I do creative writing, I write slowly. When it comes it comes. I let the writing come through me. It's my intake outtake. I listened to music, go check out a movie, go for walks and write.

Q. I'll ask the usual gossip question, what's your status?

I'm single, not close to marriage. If I do see someone, I just want to

deal with her. It's very difficult in this position (travelling and writing) to have a relationship.

**It only takes
5 fingers to
pick up
The Onyx**

L.A.S.O.

Latin American Student Organization



"Dedicated to the advancement of our Culture
and the preservation of our Identity."

1st LASO meeting of the Fall Quarter:
September 30th at 6:00 PM
Room 435 in the Curry Student Center

Hip-Hop Track By Track



ALBUM REVIEW

Maurice Archer
Onyx Staff

A'ight, I hope y'all are ready for another ill a\$S year at this school we call Northeastern. Another year and hip-hop is still running sh**. Well, considering that the Mobb Deep (Havoc and Prodigy) album is the best, most recent hip-hop album to hit the stores, I'm gonna do a review of "Murda Muzik". It's only right that the new school year be started off with a group out of Queens, NY. Considering your writer is representin' Jamaica Queens to the fullest. Anyway, back to the album. Yo, I know some of you got a bootleg of this one off the internet or somethin' like that but the album was still worth paying money for anyway. I bought it the first day it came out because they're one of my favorite groups and I waited for it to hit the stores so I could support it. If you're a Mobb Deep fan, you have to love this album. If you're not though, you should still like it because they made this album for every kind of hip-hopper. They put songs on this album that have a different style than they usually produce. Before I start the recap of the newest Infamous release, I have to go over the rating system for all the new readers. Each review is based on the amount of money I would spend to buy the album on cd. The highest rating being \$14.99 because I'm not paying any more than that for one album unless it is a collectors item or something like that. For example, a top notch album would be given a rating in the area of \$12.99-\$14.99 because it's worth paying that money for it, where as a mediocre album would get a \$0.00-\$1.00 rating. Now that y'all know how things go, for me-an L, and to Queensbridge we go.

Track 1: Just a regular sample taken from an old gangsta movie. It's some guy talking about how they need to stop the mob. They used this sample because they are Mobb-Deep and because they live like gangstas.

Track 2: "Streets Raised Me" is an obvious R.I.P. track. This is how real cats from the streets cry. They must have just lost a crew member because the beat is sad, they're talking about all the cats they lost, and Prodigy is explaining what happens in the hood when someone that is cared about dies. Guest starring is their man from the Mobb, Big Noyd, to rhyme all the tears out of their eyes. It makes you wanna say, damn. Feel this track like a family member died or somethin'.

Track 3: I appreciate "What's Ya Poison" more than most of you will because I'm dying to see Cormega shine. He's mad nice and no one gives him his props. Havoc makes one of the illest beats for his ni\$Sas from the bridge. It's just drums and keys played from one side of the piano to the other over and over again. That sh** is phat. I'm feelin' this track. They all represent on this one. On the low, Havoc is my favorite of the two. I think Prodigy is naturally better at the rhymin part, but Havoc is all around my ni\$Sa from back day (as he would say). They both make a phat a\$S team.

Track 4: Spread love is the one song on this album that I just can't learn to like. The beat is ok, but the way they rhyme to it is off beat to me. The song talks about cats that want beef. Prodigy's sayin' that we should spread love because war with him will leave you in a state you don't want to be in. He references to his beef with Keith Murray and Tupac through the whole album but this song has a lot of them.

Track 5: "Let a Ho be a Ho" is the comedy section of the album. Havoc tells a story similar to the "Trife Life" saga from the past two albums but with a happy ending. These songs talk about him going to visit a female or a female visiting him. Here, he's talking about a female in his crib that he's...having his way wit'. At the end of the track, Havoc plays a message from his pager that a female left for him. I would write what she says but it's kind of graphic, if yanahmean. It's very funny though. I was dying for like 2 minutes when I first heard it.

Track 6: Little Cease appears courtesy of Undertainment, Biggie and ...Lil' Kim. This track called "I'm Going Out" talks about how all of them want to go out. A fast paced rhyme is kicked by the trilogy and all is good with the fast paced beat Havoc faced. Nothin' too new, but a hot track regardless.

Track 7: This is my favorite track. "Cause we infamous. Ashes to ashes til death do us." "Allustrious" is exactly what you hope cats will do on their sequel albums. It sounds like it was made like 5 years ago. It was the first track to come out down in the underground out of all the tracks. Hav put together the perfect beat for him and his man. A church organ and the hardcore percussion that only the Q-borough can bring. Everything is ill in this joint. I'm noticing that Prodigy talks about guns in every track he's on though. That's f*cked up that cats have to really be livin' like that. I guess livin' that is what it takes to produce a perfect track. They still shinin', still climbin' (for the real Mobb fans). Did I mention that I think Havoc is mad nice? They make a ill team.

Track 8: "Adrenaline" was just used by the Roots for a track name but it's cool though cause the Mobb on they own sh**. Another traditional joint. This sounds like an old school Mobb track wit a new futuristic beat to it. This is for the real NYC cats. So all y'all fake ones sit down when they play this at the elubs. All they talk about is things that go on in New York. "Guns, money, pu**y, cars, drugs, jewels, clothes, draws, killings, boroughs, buildings, disease's, stress, the d's, nyc"-says Prodigy. Notice the first word. There he goes again.

Track 9: I don't really like this one. They tried to collaborate with Eightball from down

south on "Where Ya From". I mean, Prodigy and Hav do the usual QB sh** they always do, but I don't know about Eightball. He killed it for me.

Track 10: All of you reading this have to know about "Quiet Storm" already. This was the first single on regular air play. This defines their point in rhyme. They did they thing on this one. The storm going on in the beat as Prodigy begins the song with an intro on the sh** they been through in their lives, is genius like my man from the Wu. The most traditional track on here. This track defines the album like "Shook Ones Pt.II" defined their first album. I love they sh** kid. Recognize Queens y'all.

Track 11: Another R.I.P. track. Prodigy asks "Where Ya Heart At". It just makes you think, "damn, these cats lead a rough life." A "Trife Life" as Havoc would say. It's deep and the beat is nice and calm. This and track two are trying to teach people that life is real in the ghetto. They lost their hearts when most of the people they cared about died. People hold guns to survive not because they want to.

Track 12: This skit is Big Noyd (a loyal Mobb member since the beginning) talkin' about how he doesn't like the skits other cats have on their albums. He's just talkin' for about a minute about keepin' their skit real.

Track 13: I can't believe they printed f*ck on "Can't F*ck Wit". This is a traditional Rakwon appearance. A typical beat that you can find Rakwon on at a remix or guest appearance near you. It's still hot though because Rae's verse is mad ill and the Mobb hold it down for Queens.

Track 14: "Thug Muzik" is the essence of where they're from. They got some cats from around their way to rhyme with them over the phattest, thumpinest, beat on the album. Not too much to say except that this is typical Mobb sh**. This is definitely one of the best tracks on the album. If you got a wip, bump this loud like the label they on.

Track 15: An average track is all I can say about this one. The title track "Murda Muzik" has a hypnotic beat with an old west essence to it. It's not bad because I love to hear them rhyme, it's just nothing new. I think they are talkin' about Pac in this song. They always sound like they got beef.

Track 16: To be titled "The Realest", this is the wackest beat I could think to put Kool G. Rap and the Mobb on. The flow is slow and boring. G Rap brings an ill flare to it but the flare isn't bright enough. I still like hearin' them rhyme though because Prodigy has one of the illest voices for rhyming. I don't know what else to say about this one except, needs improvement.

Track 17: OK, this is a party track I never thought I would hear on a Mobb album called "U.S.A. (A'ight Then)". It samples from an old tune I can't put my finger on. At least they still sound the same. After listening to this album about a hundred times, I've grown to appreciate this track. It shows how much they've grown in the hip-hop game. It's a nice tune to just chill out to. Smoke, drink, whatever.

Track 18: Nas usually appears at the end of the Mobb albums. So here he is on cue in "It's Mine". He has the best rhyme in the song, but they all rhyme good. The only change I would have made would have been to change the hook. Nas is saying the hook from "The Boy is Mine", slightly altered for the thug cats out there. A very good track overall though.

Track 19: The last track is a remix of track 10 ("Quiet Storm"). On this remix, the beat is exactly the same. The difference is Lil' Kim gets to rhyme (B.I.G.-R.I.P.) and instead of a written rhyme, prodigy freestyles. Havoc wrote a new rhyme for it too. Also, Kim sings the hook, with Prodigy's hook from the original in the background. "The realllllll, hip-hop, hip-hop". Nobody would have ever expected this team up. Kim even sponsored Lil' cease to make his appearance on track 6. I like how they ended it.

I gave this album a \$13.99 rating. I paid \$13.88 plus tax. I rated it this way because I am a Mobb Deep fan. If I was just hearing of them, I would rate it at \$12.99. It doesn't compare to their first album "The Infamous" (actually the second, "Juvenile Hell" was their first, but because of the really limited success of "J.V.", their second album was considered their first real album attempt), just because nothing can ever compare to a debut. Although there were two or three songs I wasn't crazy about, this was a very solid effort put forth by the Mobb. They made me proud to wear my Queens t-shirts in Boston. Some of the beats were new but the lyrics and delivery are all the same old style. Hardcore, real, and the "dunn" language as my man Prodigy would say. This album reminded me of their last album because of the variety of beats but it is different in too many ways to say that they just did what they did before. I have all the albums and I would say that this one is the worst. However, the other two are perfect to me so this one is only a step under perfection. A definite cop-able (go out and cop (get) it) for your average hip-hopper and a must for the real underground cats. Before we end this session, a little advice for the newcomers. Keep ya heads in the books. Don't lose sight of your major goal. We need more minorities in the work force out there. Also, I know the freedom from the parents is overwhelming to some of you, but use your head before any private parts. Choose your mates carefully. Looks can be very deceiving, especially up here. Know the situations you're getting into before you get into them. A'ight, that's enough for the warnings. Have fun this year, yo. This school is what you make it. Moe is out one more time. One love.